TRUMAN

I lit a fire in the sky
And, lo, both goats and sheep did die,
And bowed to me the stars on earth
While on my paper throne sat I.

Then came the lion with the bear
To laugh and warn me to beware
For they have wings as long as mine
And stalk about my paper throne.

I took no care
About this dare
For death now held my paper throne.

My wicked brother gave to me
This fire found in mustard trees,
And in the seeds lie golden flames
Which grow to giant trees of white.

The works of man
Much often can
Distort the truth of heaven's light.

But I recall that fruitful day
When I arose the eighth of May,
And, at my birth, I ate the flesh
Of swine filled up with demons mad.

Yet then the scarlet dragon flew
And broke the corn which by me grew.
So, lifted I my torch of lead
And burnt its two great horns.

The endless stone from which I ruled
With budding staff and crowns bejeweled
Soon broke in four and out the cracks
Grew thorny, twisting vines.

The grapes were tread
In streets turned red
Where temples held the dead enshrined.

Throughout the earth, the land grew cold
And froze all wheat that could be sold.
The sun was blackened by the torch
That held my sacred, solemn flame.

I must take care
The fire's flare
Beside my paper throne to tame.

I cannot see by this new light.
It darkens that which it makes bright.
Around it sounds the thunder's voice.
The clouds make wheels in wheels.

Then bones of every bird and beast
Around my throne were put for feast.
And every bone together came
To form the wretched Monster Snake.

With many eyes
This snake espies
All earth, all air, all sea.

And so was cast
This snake at last
Into the withered, fruitless tree.

For me I hear
The end is near
For plagues come from the east.

Behold, the blood of fathers run.
The moon will fall into the sun.
Each man to breath the air will shun,
And gold and silver rescue none.
The sky shall knock against the land.
The clouds will burn to ash and sand.
The yellow rocks will sting the hand.
The end will everyone demand.
The reason from men's mouths will flee
And thought with thought shall disagree.
Destruction of the heart I see.
And all shall be because of me.

I cannot comprehend this flame.
Its movements never stay the same.
Yet still must not a king command
All gifts he does not understand?

But who be king
If this new thing
More powerful than I is grown?

So be it then.
For at the end
Must I sit on a paper throne.

-Ross C. Poletti